

TWO GENERIC TERMS IN THE ROMANIAN FOREST TERMINOLOGY: PĂDURE AND CODRU

PĂDURE (= forest)

The Romanian word *pădure* (=forest) appears in many dictionaries along with the following definition: *pădure* s.f., pl. *păduri*: “large land area covered with trees; the group of trees growing in tight dependence on this area; trees which belong to this group, together with numerous plant species (moss, mushrooms, herbs, shrubs) and wild animals living here”. [1]

In Romanian, *pădure* is inherited from Vulgar Latin – the form *padūlem* is obtained through metathesis from Classical Latin – *palus*, *-ūdem*, which meant “swamp”. The evolution of the meaning is the following: covered with thick vegetation – reed and rush – the swamps of the past, seen from a distance, looked like forests. In other Neo-Latin languages (e.g., the French *forêt*, the Italian *foresta*, the Spanish *forestales*, the Portuguese *floresta*), the word for “forest” comes from another Latin word [*silva*] *forestis*. Yet, there is a fundamental distinction between *padūlem* and *forestis*, namely “[+/-] human intervention”: *padūlem* is a rich, thick, wild forest, impossible to cross (especially if one does not know it or unless someone *shows you the way* – cf. Sextil Pușcariu), while [*silva*] *forestis* is “managed” by man.

The Latin word *sylva* was not inherited in Romanian, but we have the Adjective *sălbatic* (= wild) coming from Vulgar Latin Adjective *silvaticus*, which, in its turn, comes from Classical Latin Adjective *syloaticus*. The initial meaning of “sălbatic” (= wild) can be related to the phrase “de pădure” (= living / growing in the forest): *animale sălbatic* (= wild animals), *viță sălbatică* (= woodvine) *flori sălbatic* (= wild flowers).

The geographical name of *Transilvania* can be easily translated: “(the land) beyond the forests”. *Ardeal*, a word of Hungarian etymology, is the exact translation of the toponym *Transilvania*. The relatively new Romanian proper names *Silvestru*, *Silvia*, *Silviu* come from the same Latin root.

The immemorial age of our forests as well as the link between the spiritual life of the dwellers and the forestial nature of the land [2] is also reflected in the Romanian folklore mythology: *Pădureanca*, *Păduroaica*, *Muma-Pădurii*, *Păduroiul* are forest “demons” and fairytale characters.

Here are some names of legendary forests which made their way into the Romanian toponymy: *Teleorman* (*deli* + *orman* – “crazy / mad forest”, meaning “large and thick”) – term of Cuman origin; *Bucovina* (= “beech forest”, from *buk* = “beech”) – term of Slavic origin, and hydronymy: *Dâmbovița* (= “a body of water flowing among the oak-trees”, from the Slavic word *donbŭ* = “oak”); *Ilfov* (from the Slavic word *elhov* = “with alders”, from *elha* = “alder”).

Bucovina, *Dâmbovița*, *Ilfov* illustrate the “survival”, in the Romanian toponymy, of some Slavic equivalents of common Latin terms, which undoubtedly

demonstrates the contact of old Slavic populations with the native sedentary population. The great importance of forests in our history as well as the stupendous extension they once had are both reflected in toponymy.

The word *pădure* is widely known and used in the territories inhabited by the Romanian speaking population; the term is recorded in all Romanian counties; the oldness as well as the stability of this word in the Romanian vocabulary reflects the importance of the forest along centuries of troubled history.

Furthermore, we must emphasize the “lexical efficiency” of this term, clearly seen in its rich lexical family (nouns, verbs and adjectives derived with prefixes, suffixes or both): *pădurar*, *pădurareș*, *păduraș*, *pădurat*, *păduratec*, *păduratic*, *pădurănesc*, *pădurăresc*, *pădurărie*, *pădurărit*, *pădurăriță*, *pădurean*, *pădureancă*, *păduresc*, *pădurește*, *pădureț*, *pădureție*, (a) *păduri*, *pădurică*, *pădurice*, *păduricios*, *păduridă*, *păduriște*, *pădurit*, *păduriță*, *păduroaică*, *păduroi*, *păduros* [DLR]. To these, we should also add: *a împăduri*, *a despăduri*, *a reîmpăduri*, *împădurit*, *despădurit*, *reîmpădurit*, *împădurire*, *despădurire*, *reîmpădurire* [DEX].

The Dictionary-Thesaurus of the Romanian Language (by the Romanian Academy) lists an important number of derivative nouns, most interesting of which are the diminutives (*pădurică* s.f., pl. *pădurele*, etymology: *pădure* + dim. suff. -*ică*; *pădurice* s.f., pl. *pădurici*, etymology: *pădure* + dim. suff. -*ice*; *păduriște* s.f., pl. *păduriști*, etymology: *pădure* + coll. suff. -*iște*; *păduriță* s.f., pl. *pădurițe*, etymology: *pădure* + dim. suff. -*iță*) as well as many old and rare terms (*pădurănesc*, etymology: *pădurean* + suff. -*esc*; *pădurăresc*, etymology: *pădure* + suff. -*ăresc*; *păduresc*, etymology: *pădure* + suff. -*esc*; *pădureție*, etymology: *pădureț* + suff. -*ie*; *păduridă*, etymology: from *pădure*, by means of analogy with words such as “*silfidă*”, “*nereidă*”).

There are multiple “echoes” of the term *pădure* in the Romanian toponymy [3], proving the importance of this reality in our history: *Pădure* (Ab [4]), *În Pădure* (Sb), *Sub Pădure* (Mș), *Calvaser-Pădure* (Sb), *Frăsinetu Pădure* (Ot), *Ibănești-Pădure* (Mș), *Idicel-Pădure* (Mș), *Orșova-Pădure* (Mș), *Urziceni-Pădure* (Sm), *Pădurea* (Ab, Mș, Sj), *Pădurea Iacobeni* (Cj), *Pădurea Neagră* (Bh), *Pădurani* (Tm), *Pădureni* (Ag, Ar, Bc, Bh, Bt, Bz, Cj, Cț, Cv, Db, Iș, If, Mș, Nț, Sj, Sb, Tm, Vs, Vr), *Pădurenii* (Bz, Cj, Db), *Pădurenii Mici* (Tm), *Pădureți* (Ag), *Pădurețu* (Ag, Vl), *Păduroiul din Deal / din Vale* (Ag), *Păduriș* (Sj), *Pădurișu* (If), *Arieșu de Pădure* (Mm), *Dealul Pădurii* (Ag), *Dubiștea de Pădure* (Mș), *Filipeștii de Pădure* (Ph), *Moara de Pădure* (Cj), *Preajba de Pădure* (Dj), *Săcalu de Pădure* (Mș), *Sângeru de Pădure* (Mș), *Sângiorgiu de Pădure* (Mș), *Sânmihaiu de Pădure* (Mș), *Seaca de Pădure* (Dj), *Marginea Pădurii* (Ph), *Valea Pădurii* (Hd, Mș), *Vărsătura Pădureni* (Vr).

There are also some “echoes” of this term in the Romanian hydronymy [5]: *Pădurea*, *Pădurilor*, *Pădurani*, *Pădureanca*, *Pădureț*, as well as in the anthroponymy [6]: *Pădurar*, *Păduraru*, *Pădurariu*, *Pădure* (last name, but also first name – *Pădure al Banului*), *Pădurean*, *Pădureanu*, *Pădureleanu*, *Pădurescu*, *Pădureț*, *Pădurețu*, *Pădurică*, *Pădurice*, *Păduroiul*.

In brief, *pădure* is an old Romanian word, inherited from Latin; it has few neological synonyms (*silvă*, *selbă*); it is widely known and used on the Romanian territory; it is very rich in derivatives (both with suffixes and prefixes); it massively entered phraseology and paremiology, mythology and folklore.

CODRU (= forest)

The Romanian term “codru” is listed in various dictionaries and regional lexicons, with one (or some) of the following definitions:

1. “land covered with vegetation and many kinds of trees” – this meaning is recorded in all Romanian counties;

2. (Ab, Ag, Ar, Bc, Br, Bt, Bv, Bz, Cs, Cț, Cv, Db, Dj, Gj, Gl, Hd, If, Il, Mh, Mm, Nț, Ot, Ph, Sv, Tl, Tr, Vl, Vs) “thick, dark forest, with various kinds of trees”;

3. (Dijir - Bh; Codlea - Bv) “young forest”;

4. “region covered with large and thick forests; hilly or mountainous region covered with old forests; regions covered with naturally grown forests; large forest, with tall trees, never-axed and with no clearings”;

5. “extended region, covered with old, large and thick forests, regardless of the trees’ essence”;

6. “forest grown on mountains, not on plains”.

Many centuries ago, the territory inhabited by the Romanian population was almost entirely covered by what they called “codri de pădure”: not only the hilly and mountainous areas, but even the low, plain areas – from the Tisza to the Danube.

Numerous historical documents [7] (maps, old papers, chronicles, accounts by foreign travellers) contain various references to “codri”. The names *Vlașca* and *Vlășia* date back since the Daco-Roman and Old Slavic cohabitation. As far as the topical name *Vlașca* is concerned, there is no room for controversy: it means “the land of the Romanians”. The topical name *Vlășia* was being interpreted either as coming from “vlah” (= “Romanic”, “Romanian”), or through the Slavic word “vles” (= “in the forest”). *Vlășia* is a very old name which can be found in Wallachia and is known everywhere in the lands inhabited by Romanians. Much later, the large forest situated North of Bucharest was named *Codrul Vlășiei*.

In the province of Moldavia, *Codrul Tigheciului* is mentioned for the first time in 1532; Miron Costin in his *Chronicle* and Dimitrie Cantemir in his book, *Descriptio Moldaviae*, also include its descriptions. A document dating back from 1536, during the reign of Petru Rareș, mentions *Codrul cel Mare*. There is also a mention of *Codrii Orheiului* from the year 1587. *Codrii Căpoteștilor*, situated West of the city of Iassy, are mentioned by Miron Costin in his *Chronicle*, in connection with a Tatar and Kazakh invasion in 1561. Also in Moldavia, there are *Codrul Ghenghii*, *Codrul Hârlăului* and *Codrul Iașilor*. In his *Chronicle*, Ion Neculce recounts the boyars’ run for their lives, in *Codrul Herței*, in 1681.

In Wallachia, in the second half of the 17th century, the documents mention *Codrii Grozăveștilor*, *Cotrocenilor* and *Lupeștilor*.

The lexicographic definition of the word “codru” is more complex than that of many terms belonging to this lexical field. Here is a list of the main elements that make up this definition:

- **dimensions:** large, extended
- **shape:** more or less square-shaped (semantic distinction operating in Old Romanian language only)
- **density:** thick, no clearings
- **age:** century-old, age-old

- **essence:** trees of various essences
- **location:** growing on hill tops or on mountains

In the lexicographic sources listed in the *Bibliography*, we identified the following meanings of the word “codru”:

1. piece;
2. piece of land;
3. forest;
4. (old meaning) mountain.

With the very same meanings, we find this term in the Southern Danube dialects (Macedo-Romanian, Megleno-Romanian and Istro-Romanian).

The etymology of “codru” is much debated and disputed; there are two hypotheses: either from the Latin, or from the substratum. Romanian linguists Candrea and Densusianu suggest the source **quodrum*, from Vulgar Latin, a form reconstructed from *quadrum* – meaning “piece, part”. Despite the Latin etymology, the vocalic transformation **a** > **o** could not be explained, this transformation being typical to the substratum (cf. Grigore Brâncuș).

On the other hand, the substratum hypothesis has a strong side – the comparison with the Albanese word *kodër, kodrë*, meaning “hill, ridge”. The meaning from the substratum would be “wooded hills / ridge”, which is plausible if we consider the importance of the wooded mountains in the life, existence and survival of the population dwelling in these areas along centuries.

The comparison with the Southern Danube dialects is also significant and endorses the substratum hypothesis: in the Megleno-Romanian dialect, “codru” means “place in the centre of the village, where people gather to deliberate”, in the Macedo-Romanian dialect, “codru” means 1. “the area of a village”, 2. “forest”, 3. “mountain”. Moreover, in *The Dictionary-Thesaurus of the Romanian Language* we find that in the Istro-Romanian dialect “codru” means “mountain”. In old documents written in the Daco-Romanian dialect, one can find the same meaning of “codru”; the same is true today, only with a local dialectal usage.

For the evolution of the meaning, there are two main hypotheses:

a) “codru” = “bucată, parte” (= piece, part) > “codru de pădure” (= piece of land covered by a forest) > “pădure” (= forest) – cf. DELR-EL

b) “codru” = “munte” (= mountain) > “munte acoperit cu păduri” (= mountain covered by forests) > “pădure mare și deasă” (= large and thick forest) – cf. Șăineanu

The importance of forests in the life and history of the Romanians is reflected by the numerous toponyms derived from or compound with “codru”, toponyms that can be found virtually anywhere in Romania: *Codru* (Bh, Hd, Sv), *Codrișoru* (Bh), *Codreanu* (Bc), *Codreni* (Bt, If, Vs), *Codrești* (Vl, Vr), *Codru Butesii* (Mm), *Capu Codrului* (Sv), *Băița de sub Codru* (Mm), *Codrețul*, *Codrul Cucului*, *Codrul de Jos*, *Codrul de Sus*, *Codreanca*, *Codreasa*, *Valea Codrului* (Bc), *Valea Mare de Codru* (Bh), *Dumbrăvița de Codru* (Bh).

There are also various anthroponyms – from the name of the 19th century writer and traveller, Ion *Codru-Drăgușanu*, to the first-names *Codruț*, *Codruța*, very common today; then, there are also some last names: *Codre*, *Codrea*, *Codreanu*,

Codrescu, Codreș, Codret, Codrici, Codricel, Codrin, Codru, Codruș, Codruț; and even nicknames: *Codrean, Codreanu, Codreanul, Codreascu, Codru*.

In the lexical family of “codru” (*codrean, codresc, codrește, codreț, a codri, codriș* etc.), the diminutives are significant both in number and as far as the suffixes involved (*codruț, codruleț, codricel, codrișor*).

In the *Regional Linguistic Atlas of Romania – Wallachia and Dobruđja* (map no 403) one can find the subjects’ answers to the following question [no. 1290] “Do you know the word codru? What is codru?”.

In Wallachia, “codru” means “forest”; this meaning can be found virtually everywhere. The meaning “piece” is rarely recorded on that map [°821 – “piece of soap”, °830 – “a round of bread, of polenta”, °844 – “a round of bread”].

When they mention “codru”, the subjects of the linguistic survey often refer to one of the following aspects:

- **dimensions:** “large forest” [°676, °680, °685, °718, °857], “long forest” [°831], “larger forest” [°709], “huge forest” [°697]
- **density:** “large thick forest” [°684], “newer, thick forest” [°704], “thick forest” [°807]
- **age:** “old forest” [°675, °677, °679, °695, °699], “over 100 year old forest” [°708]; answers mentioning “young forest” are rare and isolated “codru is a forest, but a thicker and younger one” [°727], “thick and younger forest” [°704], these answers can be considered an exception, rather than the rule
- **location:** “only in mountaineous regions do they use the word codru” [°835], “forests in the mountains” [°853], “mountain forests” [°867]

This clear preference of language users for “codru = large and / or old forest, situated on the mountains” reflects a multisecular historical reality, whose echo can still be found in the “linguistic memory” of both the communities and individuals. The most complex definitions are recorded at the point [°826] – “a bigger, thicker, older forest”, and [°710] – “massive, thick, extensive forest”.

In the *Regional Linguistic Atlas of Romania – Wallachia and Dobruđja*, on the linguistic map no. 403, there are no references to either shape or essence, despite their presence in the definitions (of the word “codru”) recorded in many dictionaries. On the other hand, in the *Atlas*, there are determiners linked to the visual perception of the forest: “green forest” [°683, °700, °756], or even “beautiful forest” [°719].

In the province of Dobruđja, the widespread meaning of the word “codru” is that of “piece, round of”. There are two widely used phrases: “round of bread”, “piece of polenta” [°871, °873, °884, °885, °886, °895], and sometimes “piece of soap” [°896]. On the other hand, the meaning “codru = pădure” can be rarely found – “he / she escaped into the forest” [°877].

The conclusion of this paper is quite obvious: the older the word, the better rooted it is in the vocabulary and the more significant its “echoes” are in the toponymic and anthroponymic systems of our language.

NOTES

[1] Cf. *DLR*, VIII, 1, 1972, p. 231.

[2] Brâncuș, 2004, p. 152.

[3] The toponyms are taken from: Bolocan, 2002.

- [4] The two letter abbreviations between round brackets refer to the names of the Romanian counties.
- [5] The hydronyms are taken from: Bolocan, 2006.
- [6] The anthroponyms are taken from: Iordan, 1983 and Constantinescu, 1963.
- [7] cf. Constantin C. Giurescu, *Istoria pădurii românești*, București, Editura Ceres, 1975: 64-85.

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Deux termes génériques dans la terminologie roumaine de la forêt: PĂDURE et CODRU

Résumé: Dans cet article, nous allons esquisser la monographie linguistique de deux mots génériques appartenant à la terminologie roumaine de la forêt. Ils sont importants pour leur ancienneté, leur stabilité et leur nature prolifique à la fois dans le vocabulaire et dans ses systèmes connexes (toponymique, anthroponymique).

Mots clé: terminologie, étymologie, histoire, toponymie, vocabulaire